

Student temporary exclusion from school for illness- basic criteria

While most illnesses do not require exclusion, there are times when the student should be sent home. If the illness:

- Prevents the student from participating comfortably in activities.
- Results in needed care greater than school personnel can provide considering the health and safety of other students.
- Poses a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others.

If any of these criteria exist, the best option for the student is exclusion, regardless of the type of illness.

The basic criteria above may be included in school procedures and shared with school staff and parents to describe situations for temporarily excluding students from school for illness. Detailed information intended for the school nurse in developing school procedures follows:

Temporary exclusion is recommended when:

- The illness prevents the student from participating comfortably in activities as observed by the school staff.
- The illness results in a greater need for care than the school staff determine they can provide without compromising their ability to care for other students.
- The student has the following conditions, unless a health professional determines the student's condition does not require exclusion.
 - The student appears severely ill—Could include lethargy, lack of responsiveness, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, or quickly spreading rash.
 - Fever (temperature **above** 101°F orally, 100°F axillary) **and** behavior change or other signs and symptoms such as a sore throat, rash, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Note: Fever as a single symptom is not a valid reason for exclusion.

Prepare for managing temporary exclusion:

- Prepare all families for inevitable illnesses ahead of time.
- Review and provide families with the temporary exclusion criteria.
- Ensure parent provided plan and back-up plan for student temporary exclusion is on file.
- Ensure all school staff know and understand the temporary exclusion criteria.

Procedure for a student requiring temporary exclusion:

- Follow plan provided by parent, report symptoms, and arrange for temporary exclusion.
- Separate student from others.
- Comfort, supervise, and observe the student until plan is implemented.
- Notify person picking the student up of any recommended guidance and readmission recommendations (Health professional's note to readmit is generally not required).
- Document actions in the students file with date, time, symptoms, actions taken, person taking actions, and signature of the person providing the service.

References

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